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Newsletter of the Montana
Office of Public Instruction
Nancy Keenan, Superintendent
Vol. 38, No. 5

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# Legislative wrap-up: changes are coming

The 1995 legislative session is over. Legislative actions most likely to affect schools include a continued freeze in special education funding; cuts in the Office of Public Instruction's operating budget, especially in the area of curriculum services; rejection of $6.5 million in Goals 2000 grant monies; and reductions in property taxes.

Here's the wrap-up of several bills affecting education and public school funding.

**Funding for new enrollment**

The state budget for the 1997 biennium includes $24 million for increased state costs associated with the 2,800 new students that are projected to enter our public schools in the next two school years. The basic and per student entitlements that drive the school funding formula are unchanged from the 1994-95 school year; the new money will be channeled to districts experiencing increasing enrollments.

**Special education funding remains frozen**

The legislature rejected OPI's request to increase special education funding by $3.6 million for 1995-1996 and by $5.1 million for 1996-1997. As a result, special education funding remains frozen at the 1989 level of $67 million/biennium.

**Some new money for emotionally disturbed children; meanwhile, big changes loom ahead**

The legislature rejected the governor's proposed $8.2 million for the Community Impact Program to address the growing number of behavior/conduct disordered children in Montana schools and communities.

At one point in the session, the level of funding for Managing Resources Montana (MRM), which provides services for severely emotionally disturbed children, would have eliminated or severely cut community-based services of MRM. In the end, MRM came out in better shape. The state general fund allocation for community services will be $3.3 million for fiscal year 1996, as compared to $2.3 million in FY 1994. While this is substantially less of an increase than was hoped for, funding for services such as the mental health portion of day treatment programs is restored and may even be enough for an expansion of such programs.

The legislature also gave its blessing to proceed with a managed care program for mental health, which means MRM probably will be replaced by managed care in the next 18 months. This may significantly change service delivery for emotionally disturbed children and adults. Mental health services would be limited to individuals with Medicaid eligibility; however, Medicaid eligibility for mental health services would be significantly expanded.

This change, which depends on multiple federal waivers, could have a significant effect on schools. Stay tuned.

**OPI funding cut**

The Office of Public Instruction ended the session with an administrative budget that is $1.5 million less than the governor's proposed budget for the 1996-97 biennium. This reduction will require some reorganization at OPI. (See related article on page 4.)

**Goals 2000 rejected**

The legislature removed OPI's authority to distribute $6.5 million in Goals 2000 funds. The grant would have funded The Montana Plan: Making Good Schools Better. (See related article on page 3.)

**Educational technology, school-to-work die**

The OPI proposal to create a state grant program to help school districts integrate educational technology into the classroom, SB 351 (Stang, St. Regis), was killed.

A resolution jointly submitted by Governor Racicot, the Commissioner of Higher Education, OPI, and the state departments of Labor and Commerce urged the creation of a state framework for planning school-to-work reforms, receiving federal monies, and distributing the planning monies to school districts (SJR 13, Stang, St. Regis).

Despite the fact that no one opposed the bill during hearings, the resolution died in conference committee.

**Gun-free schools bill**

HB 167 (Shea, Butte) requires school boards to adopt a policy for the expulsion of a student who brings a firearm to school. The student must be expelled for a period of not less than one year; however, the trustees may authorize the school administration to modify the requirement for expulsion on a case-by-case basis. The bill does not prevent a school district from offering school-sanctioned instructional activities related to firearms and hunters education.

The recent U.S. Supreme Court ruling that overturns the federal ban on guns near schools will not affect Montana's new gun-free schools law.

**Other school funding bills**

HB 416 (Rep. McKee, Hamilton) reauthorizes the state reimbursement program for school facilities. School districts that sold bonds for school facilities after July 1, 1991, and that are "low-wealth" districts (that is, the district raises less revenue per student per mill than the statewide average) will be eligible for state equalization aid to assist with debt service payments.

The appropriation of state reimbursements has been increased from $1 million annually in each year of the current biennium to $1.5 million for 1995-96 and $2

**(Continued on page 12)**

**HANG IN THERE—ALMOST SUMMER!**

## Message from Nancy Keenan

# "Find your voice"

Extremism reached a new level in Montana during the 1995 legislative session. We saw legislation that would undo decades of the work that built Montana's excellent public schools. Bills were introduced to abolish Montana's compulsory education law, remove educational equality from the state constitution, scrap the school accreditation standards, and channel taxpayer dollars to private schools. And that was just the legislation affecting education. Many other extreme initiatives were introduced, such as bills to infringe on citizens' privacy and encourage the formation of militia groups.

Fortunately, most of the extreme initiatives died during the legislative process. Some, however, survived, including the decision to reject Montana's Goals 2000 grant. This action brought Montana the dubious distinction of becoming the only state in the nation to say "no thanks" to Goals 2000 funds. The grant funds would go a long way toward supporting locally developed school improvement projects, but ultra-conservative forces decided local schools didn't need that money.

Let us not close our eyes to what is happening here. A civil war is brewing in our communities, our state, and our nation.

We see it in our public schools, where extremist pressure groups disrupt classrooms and school board meetings.

We see it in our communities, where our neighbors who work for the city and county fear for their own safety because of threats from anti-government groups.

We saw it at the state legislature, in the drastic legislation that was introduced and passed.

And we saw it in its most violent form in the deadly explosion at a federal building in Oklahoma City.

We live in serious times. Those of us who work for the government at any level, from the local school district to the federal government, suddenly know how it feels to be the target of senseless hatred.

Everyone has a right to have and express his or her own opinion, and we must take care to be respectful of people with different views. But no one has a right to incite violence and hatred. No one has a right to bomb day care centers.

Nothing less than our nation's stability and democracy are at stake. We cannot be silent. We must find our voices — each of us — and speak out against the extremism, the violence, and the cynicism seething in this state and nation today.

I call upon all my friends and colleagues in Montana's education community to pay attention to what is happening. Be vigilant. Stick together. Speak out for understanding, tolerance, and respect. You cannot rely on a handful of people who have the courage to stand up and speak. You must lend your voice, or our democracy is threatened.

I also hope you will take time this summer to rest and gather your energy. And give yourself a pat on the back. As an educator, your job becomes more difficult every year as you contend with more students, more challenges, more criticism, and less money. Yet you continue to work, with dedication and love, for the children of Montana.

You have my deep respect and my thanks.

Nancy Keenan

# Change in federal record retention period

Effective immediately, the period of retention of records for federal programs administered by the U.S. Department of Education has been reduced from five years plus the current year to three years plus the current year. Source: Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR), 34 CFR Part 74, subsection 74.21.

# Certification update

Montana teachers may be able to work through their districts or professional associations next year for approval of professional development with renewal unit credit for certification.

This process would remove the need to submit individual requests for renewal unit approval to the Office of Public Instruction (30 days in advance) for every program used for certification renewal.

Under changes made at the March meeting of the Board of Public Education, accredited school systems (including higher education units), professional education associations, and government agencies may apply for approval as "providers" of renewal unit credit.

Under the new administrative rules, an approved application for provider status would authorize such groups to develop programs that meet the criteria for renewal unit credit and issue certificates to those who attend the programs. K-12 schools may also determine that programs at other sites, such as conferences from nonapproved providers, meet approval criteria and issue certificates to employees who attend. Annual reporting and verification of compliance with rules will be required.

Application forms for provider status will be available to all school districts and county superintendents by June 1, 1995, for the 1995-96 academic year. Initial applications may be submitted at any time during the year but must be approved prior to use of these provisions. An approved application this July would eliminate the need for 30-day advance application for renewal unit credit on late summer and fall inservice programs.

Notices and information will be sent to all organizations and agencies that have had recent contact with OPI on renewal unit approval. For more information, please contact the Certification Office at OPI (444-3150) or contact Don Freshour, director of teacher education and certification (444-2577). ■

**—Don Freshour, Director, Teacher Education and Certification, OPI**

# McAuliffe fellow will use "the power of story" to integrate history & language arts

The link between history and language arts is a natural one, yet traditionally, schools separate the two. Montana's new Christa McAuliffe fellowship winner intends to change that.

Sarah Reeve, an English teacher at St. Ignatius Middle School, will use her fellowship to develop a middle school interdisciplinary curriculum in which the history and language arts courses are merged through use of historical fiction, personal narratives, and biographies.

Her plan calls for teaching history "drawing off the power and complexity of stories" to integrate reading, thinking, writing, and knowledge acquisition.

Reeve is no stranger to interdisciplinary learning. She and the social studies teacher at St. Ignatius have opened the wall between their classes, reading historical novels with their students then designing projects in which students bring together historical facts with human realities portrayed in the literature.

"During these units, the classroom is lively and engaging because our students are actively investigating history brought to life for them through literary and historical characters," Reeve says.

"However, like all teachers, we are restricted by time and energy, so these interdisciplinary units occur only a few times a year."

Reeve's fellowship year will allow her to spend time and energy developing model interdisciplinary units that can be shared with middle schools across Montana. ■

### Correction:

In the last issue of *Montana Schools*, we said that All-USA Academic Team member Lorretta Krautscheid studies at the Montana State University College of Technology-Great Falls. She is at the MSU College of *Nursing*-Great Falls.

*Montana Schools* (USPS 601690) is published bimonthly except July/August by the Office of Public Instruction, State Capitol Building, Helena, Montana 59620. It is distributed free to schools and members of groups interested in education in Montana. Second Class postage paid at Helena, MT.

*Montana Schools* is published each October, December, February, April, and June. Deadline for articles is the first of the month prior to each publishing month. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Office of Public Instruction, State Capitol, Helena, MT 59601.

Editor, photographer, layout: Sanna Kiesling (406-444-3160).

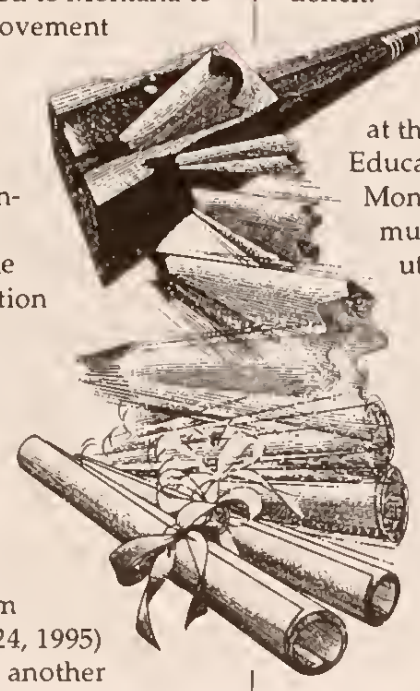
# Montana becomes only state to reject Goals 2000 grant

## *School improvement efforts will continue, say Racicot & Keenan*

Montana made national news in April by becoming the only state to say "no thanks" to Goals 2000 funds.

After weeks of hot debate, the Montana Legislature decided to reject the funds.

The federal funds, appropriated by Congress through Goals 2000: Educate America Act, were granted to fund The Montana Plan: Making Good Schools Better. The Office of Public Instruction anticipated $6.5 million would have been awarded to Montana to fund school improvement projects.



*Education USA*, a national publication, quoted Montana representative Tom Zook, who explained the legislature's rejection thus: "We have a good education system, and we don't need any help with our curriculum." ("Montana Poised to Leave Goals 2000 Reform Program," April 24, 1995)

*Education Week*, another national publication, quoted Superintendent Nancy Keenan as saying the rejection of Goals 2000 money "is one of many alarming and extreme measures which surfaced in this session of the Montana legislature." ("Montana Lawmakers Reject Goals 2000 as Other States Sign On," April 19, 1995)

### Minor setback, major tragedy

"This is a minor setback for the statewide school improvement effort, but it's a real tragedy for local schools," said Superintendent Nancy Keenan. "It won't deter our planning; it just keeps us from distributing funds to schools. It denies funds for locally developed projects that parents want for their kids."

"The money presented a great opportunity for local schools, but Montanans are intent on good education. We'll continue regardless," said Governor Marc Racicot.

### Off again, on again, off again

The state House of Representatives took the first action against the funding when it voted during floor action to remove OPI's authority to spend or distribute Montana's Goals 2000 grant.

The Senate Finance and Claims Committee later reversed the House's action. In the waning hours of the session, however, a conference committee again denied OPI the authority to distribute or spend the grant.

### Second-year funding in jeopardy

Congress appropriated $1.6 million in Goals 2000 for Montana to use during the 1995-96 school year. Ninety percent of funding in the second round of grants would have been distributed to Montana school districts that choose to apply. It is anticipated that about 100 Montana districts would have received funding during the next biennium.

### Funds will go to other states

Several legislators who opposed Montana's Goals 2000 grant said they want the money to go toward reducing the federal deficit.

But according to Tom Fagan, director of the Goals 2000 staff at the U.S. Department of Education, any grant money Montana doesn't spend must, by law, be redistributed to other states.

"Even if the money did go to reduce the federal deficit, which it won't, it's inconsistent to reject this grant and keep other federal grants," said Keenan. Some examples of federal grants accepted by the 1995 Legislature for the 1995-96 biennium include:

- $392 million to the state Department of Transportation, including $3.9 million for converting to the metric system;
- $53.7 million to the state Department of Labor & Industry;
- $1.4 million to the state Department of Agriculture;
- $19.8 million to the Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks, including $100,000 for reintroducing blackfooted ferrets.

### Fear of federal intrusion

Most other states have applied for and accepted Goals 2000 grants, although four states are holding out. New Hampshire, South Dakota, Virginia, and Wyoming have yet to apply for funding.

In Idaho, the state school board voted 7 to 1 last month to prevent State Superintendent Anne Fox from returning Idaho's $448,000 Goals 2000 grant.

In states that are leery of Goals 2000 funds, issues have focused on fear of federal intrusion.

The federal intrusion theme was voiced by opponents in the Montana legislature, too, even though Keenan and Racicot have explained that participation in The Montana Plan and Goals 2000 is strictly voluntary. Fagan echoes that. "Participation in Goals 2000 is a state option," he said. "It's optional on the local level too. We don't force it on anybody."

**"Montanans are intent on good education; we'll continue regardless."**

*—Governor Marc Racicot*

### Work continues

Montana has authorization through June 30, 1995, to spend its first-year grant. Work will continue using available funds.

"Planning for school improvement is essential, and Governor Racicot and I remain committed to this project," said Keenan. "This work will continue."

On April 24, a statewide "electronic town meeting" was conducted from the public television studio in Bozeman, enabling Montanans across the state to participate in school improvement discussions.

### Some background

In August 1994, Governor Marc Racicot and the Office of Public

(Continued on page 12)

## Montana Plan/Goals 2000 grant recipients for 1995-96

Grant applications for first-year Montana Plan funds were provided to interested school districts in January 1995. Parents, educators, and community members worked together to assess local needs and develop grant proposals. Twenty-eight districts submitted applications to OPI, competing for $224,827 in available funds. Nine applications were approved for funding.

Because the legislature removed OPI's authority to distribute the grant funds after June 30, 1995, districts selected for grants probably will not receive all of their grant funds. It is unknown at this time how much funding the districts will lose.

| District | Funds to be Awarded |
|---|---|
| Havre | $30,890 |
| Bozeman | 20,000 |
| Rocky Boy | 10,000 |
| Canyon Creek (Yellowst. Co.) | 10,000 |
| Billings | 50,000 |
| Helena | 39,400 |
| Libby | 6,979 |
| Monforton | 35,075 |
| Hellgate Elem. (Missoula) | 22,483 |
| Total | $224,827 |

### How the districts plan to spend their grants

***Havre Public Schools:*** The grant would support development of a plan to increase elementary student access to computer technology, plus technology education for all K-12 students. In partnership with a private school and Montana State University-Northern, the district would provide 100 teachers with instruction in educational technology.

***Bozeman Public Schools:*** The grant would help the district implement its local plan to improve students' foreign language skills and thinking skills. Plans call for a pilot project at one elementary school to integrate second-language instruction.

***Rocky Boy Public Schools:*** The district would use the funds to increase parental involvement in preschool children's literacy development; to strengthen elementary students' performance in reading, writing, and math; and to improve middle school student attendance.

***Canyon Creek:*** The district plans to develop a unified school improvement plan to address the needs of students and families.

***Billings Public Schools:*** Grant funds would help all K-12 schools increase student achievement. The district plans to create teams at each school including the principal, key teachers, district central office staff, parents, and community representatives. Examples of school improvement goals include the following:

- Beartooth Elem.: Increase mathematics scores.
- Big Sky Elem.: Improve reading performance.
- Burlington Elem.: Increase vocabulary skills.
- Meadowlark Elem.: Improve science instruction.
- Riverside Middle School: Reduce number of discipline referrals.
- Skyview High School: Improve student behavior as measured by referrals to the dean's office.

***Helena Public Schools:*** Grant funds would help task forces implement the district's local plan for school improvement. Task force members would examine current practices and research, visit other school districts, and make recommendations to the school board.

***Libby Public Schools:*** Grant funds would support integration of technology with the learning process to increase student academic performance, communication skills, competence, and interest in using technology. Plans called for developing student computer labs.

***Monforton Elementary Schools (Bozeman):*** The district, in partnership with Montana State University, plans to provide technology training to all educators to improve teaching and learning.

***Hellgate Elementary Schools (Missoula):*** The district, in partnership with the University of Montana, would provide training to UM students who are pursuing a reading specialist endorsement. The UM students would work with elementary school students who have reading and writing weaknesses. Parents would learn ways to help their children improve reading and writing skills. ■

# Legislative cuts will require some reorganization at OPI

*"We will continue providing the best services possible with enthusiasm"*

In the wake of legislative cuts, the Office of Public Instruction is exploring ways to reorganize the delivery of educational services.

The cuts mean OPI's general fund operating budget for fiscal year 1996-97 will be more than 10 percent lower than the agency's 1995 budget.

State Superintendent Nancy Keenan vowed to continue providing quality services to schools with the available resources.

**"It isn't grim, but it is serious." —Deputy Superintendent Jack Copps**

"We will continue providing the best services possible with optimism and enthusiasm," said Keenan. "But we will have to cut some services. The legislature was clear about where it wanted the cuts."

While it is still uncertain how many staff members OPI will lose, the estimated number is 10 FTE (full-time equivalent) staff.

"It isn't grim, but it is serious," said Deputy Superintendent Jack Copps. "We hope to accommodate most of the hit through voluntary retirement and voluntary RIFs (reductions in force)."

**Basic Education hardest hit**

The Basic Education Division took the biggest cut. The legislature reduced the division's operating budget by $185,143 per year. This division includes OPI's curriculum specialists who assist schools in the basic subject areas, such as math, science, reading, social studies, and English.

Repeated attempts to restore funding for the division during the session failed.

## Legislative cuts to OPI budget

**General fund (state) cuts**

- $84,416/year from the superintendent's office.
- $30,442/year from Centralized Services (word processing, mail room, payroll clerk, etc.)
- $185,143/year from Division of Basic Education.
- $112,000/year in vacancy savings.
- Elimination of bus and bicycle safety positions.

**Total general fund cuts:** $412,000 annually (not including traffic education cuts).

**Federal funding cuts**

The legislature cut $617,950/biennium in federal funding, not including the loss of Goals 2000 funds.

**Bus & bicycle safety gone**

Because of legislative cuts in funding for OPI's Division of Traffic Education, OPI will lose the school bus safety and bicycle/pedestrian safety programs. Again, repeated attempts to restore this funding failed. However, a last-minute motion in the conference committee on HB 2 moved the bus safety responsibilities to the Department of Transportation as of July 1, 1995.

**The incredible shrinking agency**

Going into the 1995 session, OPI had the same number of employees, counting both state and federal staff, as in 1970, even though the agency has many more statutory responsibilities and serves more students than 25 years ago.

The 1995 budget cuts mean OPI will have fewer staff than in 1970.

"There seems to be a mistaken perception that OPI is a large agency," said Keenan. "Fifty percent of our budget is federally funded. When you look only at state-funded staff, we're a fairly small state agency. We may be the only state agency to shrink since 1970." ■

Hardest hit: OPI's Division of Traffic Education (above) and Division of Basic Education (below), pictured here in staff photos taken last summer.

## *Sound familiar?*
## Other states face cuts, challenges to public schools

Legislative action in Montana in the 1995 session mirrored events in several other states.

Take Wisconsin, for example. Mark Ibach of the state Department of Education recently called OPI requesting to reprint Superintendent Nancy Keenan's column from the March/April issue of *Montana Schools*. He wanted Wisconsin educators to see that other states are grappling with the same issues as Wisconsin, including cuts in state education department budgets and proposals to channel public funds to private schools. Ibach said he could "just substitute the names and the photo" from Superintendent Keenan's column and it would fit Wisconsin.

"We're fighting for our lives here," Ibach said, referring to attacks on public education.

In North Carolina, the state legislature wants another 50 percent reduction in the state Department of Public Instruction (DPI), even though the agency's staff has declined by 23 percent since 1989. As in Montana and many other states, the North Carolina legislature is also considering changing the state superintendent from an elected position to an appointed one. (*Education Report*, N.C. DPI, 1995) ■

## *On the federal scene:*
## Rescissions trimmed, programs may merge

In the last issue of *Montana Schools*, we reported on efforts in the U.S. Congress to rescind major portions of education funding already appropriated for fiscal year 1995.

The U.S. House passed a bill cutting nearly $1.7 billion in education programs. The Senate's version of the rescission bill, however, reduces House education cuts by $1.25 million.

The Senate version does not include proposed cuts of $100 million from the Safe and Drug-Free Schools program, $72.5 million from Title I district grants, and $16.3 million from impact aid.

The Senate version would also reduce rescissions from Goals 2000 funds to $7.6 million, school-to-work to $5 million, and immigrant education to $2.2 million.

A conference committee is expected to reconcile differences between the House and Senate versions in May. President Clinton has indicated he will likely sign the Senate's version of the bill.

**U.S. House and Senate explore merging educational programs**

House Republicans plan to merge several K-12 programs into a massive state block grant, according to *Education USA* (April 24, 1995). Included in the merger may be Goals 2000, Dwight D. Eisenhower Professional Development grants, Title VI (Chapter 2), and several technology programs.

Meanwhile, the Senate is working on a bill (S. 143) that would allow states to combine vocational training programs, including the School-to-Work Opportunities Act, the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act, and several Labor Department programs.

Another Senate bill (S. 673) would merge the Safe and Drug-Free Schools program with other youth programs. The bill would suggest that county-level boards use grants for crime and drug prevention programs. The bill suggests, but does not require, that the county boards include school officials, law enforcement personnel, and youth workers.

**National standards may be scrapped**

A senate bill (S. 323) would disband the National Education Standards and Improvement Council and forbid the National Education Goals Panel from certifying national standards. It would also prohibit the U.S. Education Department from making grants to write national opportunity-to-learn standards. (*Education USA*, April 10, 1995) ■

# Who are Montana's students and school staff?

## Enrollment continues to grow

Enrollment in Montana public schools has increased steadily in the last five years, from 151,149 students in school year 1989-90 to 164,341 in 1994-95. During that time, high school enrollment increased by 15 percent and elementary enrollment increased by 6 percent.

Table 1 shows the 1994-95 enrollment by grade. Note that enrollment is highest in grades 6 through 9. Three years from now, those students will be in high school; the high school enrollment will increase by an additional 11 percent to nearly 53,000 students. The smaller classes in the lower grades indicate that elementary enrollment will probably decline somewhat over the next four years.

Table 1. Montana public schools enrollment by grade, 1994-95

| *Grade* | *Enrollment* | *Grade* | *Enrollment* |
|---|---|---|---|
| PreKindergarten | 483 | Gr 9 | 13,309 |
| Kindergarten | 11,820 | Gr 10 | 12,148 |
| Gr 1 | 12,852 | Gr 11 | 11,286 |
| Gr 2 | 12,391 | Gr 12 | 10,681 |
| Gr 3 | 12,845 | HS Ungraded | 288 |
| Gr 4 | 13,009 | **Total High School** | 47,712 |
| Gr 5 | 13,113 | | |
| Gr 6 | 13,194 | **Total Enrollment** | **164,341** |
| Gr 7 | 13,329 | | |
| Gr 8 | 13,229 | | |
| Ele Ungraded | 364 | | |
| **Total Elementary** | **115,629** | | |

## Most students are white males

Table 2 shows the percentage of students by gender and racial/ethnic category. American Indian students are the largest minority group in Montana public schools; the second largest minority group is Hispanic. In the spring of 1994, 9,061 students graduated from public schools in Montana. Of the total graduates, 5.9 percent were American Indian.

Table 2. Montana public students by category, 1994-95

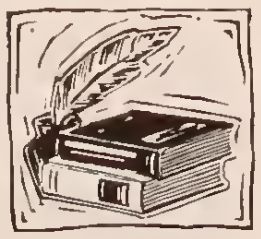
| | *Percent of Enrollment* | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Category* | *Elementary* | *High School* | *Total* |
| Male | 51.7% | 51.5% | 51.7% |
| Female | 48.3% | 48.5% | 48.3% |
| American Indian | 10.5% | 7.4% | 9.6% |
| Asian | 0.9% | 0.7% | 0.8% |
| Hispanic | 1.5% | 1.3% | 1.4% |
| Black | 0.5% | 0.4% | 0.5% |
| White | 86.6% | 90.3% | 87.7% |
| **Total Enrollment** | **71.0%** | **29.0%** | **100.0%** |

## Where the students attend school

Seventy percent of Montana's K-12 students attend school in small towns or rural areas. In Montana, cities classified as mid-sized include Billings and Great Falls; 21 percent of Montana's students attend schools in those cities or in nearby communities. The large towns (Butte, Missoula) enroll 9 percent of Montana's students. Table 3 indicates percentages by size of community (based on U.S. Census classification).

Table 3. Montana enrollment by size of community, 1994-95

| *Size of Community* | *Percent of Enrollment* |
|---|---|
| Mid-Size City | 19% |
| Fringe of Mid-Size City | 2% |
| Large Town (over 25,000) | 9% |
| Small Town (2,500 to 25,000) | 34% |
| Rural (less than 2,500) | 36% |



## Certified staff: who they are

While Montana public school students are mostly male, white, and rural, certified staff are mostly female, white, and rural. Female teachers and specialists outnumber male teachers by about 2 to 1, but all categories of administrators or supervisors are predominantly male. Table 4 indicates the full-time equivalent (FTE) totals by category.

Table 4. Montana public school staff data, 1994-95

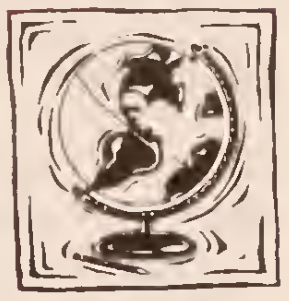
| *Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) certified staff* | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Category* | *FTE* | *Male* | *Female* |
| Teachers - classroom, Ch. 1, Spec Ed. | 10,086 | 33% | 67% |
| Specialists - library, guidance, psych. | 799 | 32% | 68% |
| Principals and asst. | 478 | 72% | 28% |
| Superintendents and asst. | 151 | 89% | 11% |
| Other supervisors, program coord. | 159 | 57% | 43% |
| **Total FTE Certified Staff** | **11,673** | 35% | 65% |

## Number of school districts is declining

Montana currently has about 3,000 fewer school districts than it had 65 years ago. In recent years, the major reason for the decline has been consolidation of districts, creation of K-12 districts, and the closure and annexation of extremely small districts that no longer have students. Joint boards may be created to serve both an elementary and a high school district, reducing the number of district administrative units. Table 5 shows the composition of district administrative units in Montana.

Table 5. Montana school district data, 1994-95

| | |
|---|---|
| *Districts* | |
| K-12 Districts | 43 |
| Combined Districts (joint boards) | 118 |
| Single Districts | 192 |
| Non-operating Districts | 10 |
| **Total District Administrative Units** | **363** |
| | |
| *Schools* | |
| Elementary Schools | 505 |
| Middle, 7&8, Junior High | 214 |
| High Schools | 173 |
| **Total Schools** | **895** |



# *Norm-referenced testing: Montana students are ahead of the pack*

Montana students scored well above the national average on norm-referenced tests in the 1993-94 school year, according to a statewide report compiled by the Office of Public Instruction.

Since 1992, the Montana Board of Public Education has required all accredited schools to report district level achievement test score results to OPI. Students in grades 4, 8 are 11 are to be tested in reading, language arts, math, science, and social studies.

With few exceptions, Montana students score above the average on norm-referenced tests, which is consistent with ACT and SAT college board scores that show Montana seniors scoring significantly above national averages.

Statewide scores are summarized by grade, test, and subject area. The vast majority (93 percent) of Montana's state-level scores are above the 50th NCE (National Curve Equivalent). The 50th NCE is an average score; 50 percent of the students taking norm-referenced tests nationwide generally score higher than the 50th NCE, and 50 percent score lower. Twenty-one percent of Montana's scores are above the 60th NCE. The highest scores are in social studies and science.

**Iowa Test of Basic Skills most commonly used**

Districts may choose one of five commercial norm-referenced standardized tests: the California Achievement Test (CAT), Stanford, Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS), Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) and the Metropolitan Achievement Test (MAT). The most commonly used test is the ITBS. The next two most commonly used are the CTBS and the Stanford. Together, these three tests account for 97.4 percent of the testing in Montana.

**Scores change little from year to year**

A comparison between Montana's average NCE scores reported for 1992-93 and 1993-94 indicates only small changes in test score averages from one year to the next. Some scores went up slightly; some went down slightly. A third-year comparison will provide more information.

Trends in test scores over the years can be helpful in evaluating the impact of programs when used in conjunction with additional information such as drop-out data, curriculum development, and student/staff ratios. ■

—Dori Nielson, OPI Education Analyst

# Highland School project involves entire Billings community

On March 3, the curtain went up on the premier of the musical "Jack and the Golden Goose."

The thespians taking the stage at Rocky Mountain College's Losekamp Hall, however, were not college students but pupils from Billings Highland Elementary School. Their stage debut was the culmination of a three-month, parent-initiated project designed to give Highland students a chance to dive into the creative arts: to act, sing, write poetry, draw, and perform.

Dubbed "New Faces," the project began as the brainchild of Sue Stanaway, a Highland parent and alumnus. Sue's own experiences as a performer had convinced her that participating in theater built self-esteem and opened up the door to a new and exciting perspective on the world. She wanted to share that experience with interested Highland children.

Stanaway's vision fell on fertile ground at Highland School and, in the fall of 1994, the project began to grow. Plans were made to publish a book of student writings and illustrations. Volunteers were recruited and sponsors were found. The Losekamp Theater was reserved for the performances of "Jack and the Golden Goose" on March 3 and 4.

In January, "New Faces" started with "Artist's Week." According to Judy Evans, Highland School principal, 20 different Montana artists presented hands-on workshops for Highland students. The workshops let students explore writing, illustration, music, theater, and creative movement while gaining confidence in their own creative abilities. Stimulated by the workshops, students created the work they eventually submitted for the Highland publication which appeared in late February.

At the same time, after-school rehearsals began for "Jack and the Golden Goose." Evans says student response and enthusiasm were overwhelming; over a third of Highland students attended the first rehearsal. To provide more parts, "Jack" was double cast with each set of players responsible for two performances. Rehearsals were held until 5:15 daily and on Saturdays and holidays.

Parental involvement was key to making "New Faces" not only possible but successful. Evans notes that "New Faces" is "the kind of thing that brings the parents into the school to work directly with the kids. This is not baking cookies. It's really a unique project." Children and parents learned from each other and were rewarded by the time spent together.

After initiating the project, Sue Stanaway continued to be involved as the project organizer. An artist parent designed t-shirts

**"The spotlight is on, it is pointing to you. You walk out on stage, and do the best you can do!"**

**— Shelli Fortune, Grade 5, Highland School, Billings**

with the project logo and Mary McRae, a parent and sewing teacher at West High School, donated her time and involved her advanced class in designing and sewing the costumes for "Jack." Parents also provided countless hours of support and supervision during rehearsals..

"New Faces" enjoyed tremendous support from the Billing's education, arts, and business communities as well. Rocky Mountain College hosted the four performances of "Jack and the Golden Goose," which was written and directed by Gerry Roe, Rocky's director of Theater Arts. Highland music teacher Cheryle Pittack and community choral director Alice Lyon directed the music. Art teacher Phyllis Kindleman and retired theater arts teacher Archie Elliot worked with students on the scenery. Dean Witter Reynolds provided "New Faces" t-shirts for students and staff. The Billings *Gazette* printed posters for the play, published the book of student writing, and provided copies for all students and staff. Evans donated many evenings to proofing the publication, making sure that all of her students were represented.

When the curtain fell on the final performance of "Jack and the Golden Goose," all those involved deemed it a tremendous success. Stanaway's dream had been realized; students had participated in a major theater production and were published authors. The smiles, excitement, and newfound aplomb on the children's faces as they took their final bows were proof of the project's value.

"New Faces" was a true col-

(Continued on page 12)

## 1995 Geography Bee winner

Can you name the only country in the Western Hemisphere that was **not** invited to attend the Summit of the Americas in Miami in December 1994?

Phillip Bloom, a sixth-grade student from Arrowhead Elementary in Billings, knew the correct answer (Cuba). His geographic savvy won him $100 and an all-expense-paid trip to the National Geography Bee in May.

Bloom competed with 100 other Montana students in the seventh annual Montana Geography Bee on April 7, 1995, in Helena. These talented fourth- through eighth-grade students were striving for state honors and a chance to compete in the National Geography Bee finals in Washington, D.C. The top national prize is a $25,000 college scholarship. Kyle Henne, a seventh-grade student from Cut Bank Middle School, came in second and was awarded $75. Aaron Bouschor, a seventh-grade student from Linderman Junior High in Kalispell, took third place and received $50.

This year, Montana was delighted to welcome Gilbert Grosvenor, president and chairman of the National Geographic Society, as an honored guest and speaker at the state Geography Bee. The 1994 National Geography Bee winner, Anders Knospe of Bozeman, also addressed the crowded audience and shared some of his experiences from last year's National Geography Bee.

Phillip Bloom, Arrowhead Elementary

The National Geographic Society developed the Geography Bee in response to concern about the lack of geographic knowledge among young people in the United States. The Society designed the Geography Bee to encourage students to learn and enjoy geography and to stimulate educators to put geography back into the curriculum.

For more information, contact the National Geography Bee (202-828-6659). ■

## Field Notes

## Havre students take on new "ROLES"

**—by Howard E. Hahn, Assistant Principal, Havre High School**

"Empowerment" has become a popular term used by people who choose to lead their own lives rather than be led. That's exactly what the Havre High School Student Congress intends to offer students in Havre Public Schools. With the direction of Assistant High School Principal Howard Hahn and student leader Jason Holden, Student Congress members created a program called ROLES (Reading Opens Leadership for Elementary Students) as part of their service requirement. The goal of this project is to encourage high school students to actively participate in their community.

ROLES is an interactive reading program involving the high school and elementary schools in Havre. High school students participate in the program by going to the elementary schools once a week and reading stories to the younger students.

As Jason said, "Seeing that students did not have, or chose not to use, their leadership abilities, I felt it necessary to create a program that defined leadership by action. We wanted to create a program that would help high school students become better leaders."

For Jason's assignment, he chose to read to Mrs. Beakers' first graders at Devlin Elementary every Friday morning. One of the selections Jason read to the class was from a piece he did for his humorous oral interpretation class assignment, "The Stinky Cheese Man." The first-grade class was extremely enthusiastic!

In addition to reading to the elementary classes, the high school students try to be active participants in the elementary classrooms. If an elementary student needs help or needs a question answered, the high school student becomes a helper.

All K-4 grades and one fifth-grade class have participated in the program. The fifth-grade class was a special project as it involved four high school students working together.

The program was initially started two years ago as a service requirement for Student Congress members, but because of the popularity of the program, many nonmembers wanted to participate. Both high school students and elementary schools really enjoy the interaction this program has created. ■

"Field Notes" is a forum for Montana educators, students, and parents. Views in Field Notes do not necessarily represent views of the Office of Public Instruction.

# Dispatches

**"Dispatches" are updates by Office of Public Instruction staff. Staff members may be reached at the phone numbers listed or by writing them at the Office of Public Instruction, P.O. Box 202501, Helena, MT 59620-2501.**

## LAW-RELATED EDUCATION
**Lorrie Monprode-Holt, Specialist**
**444-2979**

### Summer institute schedules

For information on the following courses, please contact Deb Rogers at OPI (444-0906 mornings) unless otherwise noted.

**Missoula:** University of Montana, June 14-16, 1995. Contact Marilyn Ryan (251-3510).

**Missoula:** University of Montana, June 12-30, 1:00-3:00 p.m., Journalism Building, Room 307. Peer Mediation and Conflict in Our Schools. Two credits, $165.

A 30-hour workshop featuring general mediation principles and applications. Uses case studies, role plays, facilitated discussion, and presentations. Focuses on the identification of communication strategies, understanding and teaching the mediation process, dealing with the difficult student, selecting peer mediators, and examining how a peer mediation program could work in your school.

Enrollment limited to 40. Please send a deposit of $50 to reserve your place. Balance is due by June 1. Contact Kitty Lusse, Montana Mediators (543-1113).

**Helena:** Carroll College, June 26-30, 1995. Advanced Leadership Training. Indian LRE, Violence Prevention, and Peer Mediation. For experienced LRE teachers only. Teacher/attorney partners are encouraged.

**Billings:** Montana State University-Billings, July 27, 28, & 31, 1995. With Liberty and Justice for All: Part I. One credit. *Fee:* $70; registration: $25. Preregistration: June 23.

Designed to provide social studies/language arts teachers (grades 3-12 and special education) with high-interest lessons that promote citizenship skills, violence prevention, and conflict resolution. All instruction is activity based, focusing on critical thinking skills and problem-solving abilities. Participants will leave with a wealth of information, Law-Related Education lesson plans that fuse well with existing curricula, and high-interest materials for teachers and students.

*Instructors:* Kathy Dietrich and Sue Suiter, national trainers for the Center for Civic Education in the Law and OPI's LRE project. *Times:* 7:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

**Billings:** Montana State University-Billings, Education Bldg. Room 104. August 1-3, 1995. With Liberty and Justice for All: Part II.

An advanced workshop for those who have taken the introductory course or are familiar with Law-Related Education. Sessions include advanced training in LRE lessons and strategies. Provides useful information on rights and responsibilities of active citizenship. Includes mock trial preparation, lessons for Native American education, and a field trip to the courts.

*Instructors:* Kathy Dietrich and Sue Suiter, national trainers for the Center for Civic Education, Constitutional Rights Foundation, National Institute for Citizen Education in the Law, and OPI's LRE project. *Times:* 7:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. *Fee:* $70; deposit: $25.

**Libby:** Environmental Justice and LRE. July 5-8, 1995. An introductory-level institute designed to acquaint educators and community with Law-Related Education. Special focus on environmental justice. *Instructors:* Jeff Gruber and Lorrie Monprode-Holt.

**Libby:** July 6-7, 1995. LRE: Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship. Libby High School. One-credit course. A two-day course on a variety of law-related programs. Includes a field trip, conducted by Plum Creek Timber Co., to examine one company's efforts to go beyond what the government requires in its environmental programs.

*Presenters:* Doreen Gruber, Jeff Gruber, Bob Hislop. Contact Jeff or Doreen Gruber (293-2781).

**Crow/Northern Cheyenne Area:** Mid-July. Introduction to Law-Related Education with special emphasis on Indian LRE. *Instructors:* Georgia Howe and Lorrie Monprode-Holt.

**Havre:** Early August. An introductory course on LRE and Indian LRE for educators and community. *Instructors:* Lorrie Monprode-Holt and Assistant Chief Kevin Olson.

**Browning:** August 22-23, 1995. "Minstitute" — Reducing School Violence. *Presenters:* Lorrie Monprode-Holt (444-2979), Rhonda Williams (338-2735, 226-5500).

## MATHEMATICS/SCIENCE
**Diana Oldham, Specialist**
**444-4436**

### Workshop

A workshop connecting mathematics and science called "Calculators and Computers in Pre-Calculus" will be held at Flathead High School in Kalispell.

This is an inservice for algebra 2, pre-calculus, calculus, chemistry, and physics teachers. Eisenhower funds can be used for travel, room, and board.

**Cost:** The workshop is FREE. Optional purchase of calculators is $60 for TI-82 or $65 for TI-85.

**Content:** C²PC Institute: For algebra 2 and pre-calculus teachers. Includes modeling and problem solving. CMS Institute: For mathematics and science teachers — includes modeling and problem solving using the CBL and graphing calculator. Teachers must sign up in pairs for this institute: one math and one science teacher.

**Date and time:** July 17-21, 1995. Sessions run from 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., with small-group evening sessions. Application deadline is June 1, 1995. Enrollment is limited.

**For more information:** Contact Karen Longhart or Larry Kaber, Flathead High School, 644 4th Ave. W., Kalispell, MT 59901 (756-5099).

## TRAFFIC EDUCATION
**Curt Hahn, Specialist**
**444-4432**

### Traffic education reimbursement

If you have not already done so, please submit your reimbursement requests to us for all high school traffic education courses completed between July 1, 1994 and June 30, 1995, **no later than July 10, 1995.** You will receive your reimbursement for these programs in August. The per pupil amount will be approximately $75.

### 1995 legislation

Senate Bill 83 passed the legislature with language changing the entire source of revenue for traffic education to a percentage of driver license fees. Our "guesstimate" is that this change will provide a small increase in the per pupil amount we are able to pay schools for traffic education. We expect that the per pupil rate will increase by $15 to $90 per student. As we learn more, we will keep you posted.

The legislature also passed House Bill 248, which, among other things, officially creates the new "Cooperative Driver Testing Program (CDTP)." This new program will allow approved programs and certified teachers to administer Montana's driver license tests to students.

The first "certification training" for this program took place April 30-May 2 at the 1995 state traffic education conference sponsored by OPI and the Montana Traffic Education Association. About 175 teachers received this training.

### Harold Lair elected MTEA president

Harold Lair, an English and Driver Education teacher at Polson High School, was elected president of the Montana Traffic Education Association (MTEA). MTEA is the professional association for Montana teachers of young novice drivers and has a membership of over 150. Harold will serve a three-year term of office and will be leading the association through a period of transition as the organization's members move into their new roles as driver license examiners for their students and begin implementing new traffic education curriculum requirements.

### FREE: Driver education kit

Avoiding Collisions: How to Survive the Teenage Driving Years, was developed by the Liberty Mutual Insurance Group. For a free copy, call West Glenn Films at 1-800-325-8677. This program is aimed at generating discussion among teachers, parents, and teenagers about four major areas of concern for teenage drivers: speeding, night driving, safety belt use, and drinking and driving.

The kit includes a 16-minute videotape and instructor's materials consisting of four reproducible activity mastersheets, a master copy of the SADD Contract for Life, a sample letter to parents, a fact sheet about teen driving, a response card, and a four-page viewer's guide. The materials were designed to help teenagers identify the consequences of driving at excessive speeds, realize that night driving is hazardous, recognize the importance of seatbelt use, and establish guidelines of responsibility for both drivers and passengers.

### 39th ADTSEA conference

The annual conference of the American Driver and Traffic Safety Education Association (ADTSEA) will be held in Huntsville, Alabama, at the Hilton Hotel, August 4-11, 1995. Highlights include workshops on provisional licensing, preconference classes on "Restructuring Driver Education," and tours of the space and rocket center.

### 1995 advanced workshops

If you are interested in attending one of this year's Advanced Driver Education Workshops and earning one semester credit, please contact me at the number above.

### Approval to teach traffic education

If your teaching certificate expires this June, so does your approval to teach traffic education. If you need an application to renew or other assistance, please contact me.

## SPECIAL EDUCATION
**Dan McCarthy, Specialist**
**444-4425**

### Video teleconference debut

During the first week of March 1995, OPI's Special Education Division took to the airwaves with a series of two-way interactive video teleconferences with special educators throughout the state. Using the Montana Educational Telecommunications Network (METNET), presenters in Helena were able to see, hear, and interact instantaneously with participants at seven sites across the state.

Bob Runkel, director of special education at OPI, and the special education monitoring staff, Susan Bailey, Dan McCarthy, Marilyn Pearson, Doug Doty, Tim Harris, Francisco Román, and Karey Conn, hosted six half-day video teleconferences for participants who traveled to one of seven sites throughout the state. The audiences represented school districts and special education cooperatives scheduled for on-site monitoring during the 1995-1996 school year. Each teleconference provided an in-depth discussion of the special education monitoring process.

On March 8, Bob Runkel and members of OPI's legal staff led a full-day discussion of policy and procedure changes resulting from last year's U.S. Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) monitoring of Montana's special education program. Participants included 70 special education directors from local education

agencies and cooperatives. The training linked the Helena site to sites in Butte, Bozeman, Kalispell, Missoula, Billings, Miles City, and Great Falls.

Participants rated the video teleconference format quite favorably, with perhaps the most significant drawback being the lack of coffee and doughnuts at the site.

**Nonaversive behavior management**

The Developmental Disabilities Division of the state Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services will be hosting a workshop on nonaversive behavior management, September 19 and 20, 1995. This workshop will be conducted by the Institute for Applied Behavior Analysis, which was founded by Gary LaVigna, one of the leaders in the field of nonaversive management of troublesome behaviors. Participants may attend one or two days and will leave with a wide variety of techniques they can quickly apply in the classroom.

The cost for the two-day workshop will not exceed $98; the location is yet to be determined. A limited number of spaces are available. For more information, contact Doug Doty (444-0907) at OPI or Perry Jones (444-2995) at the Developmental Disabilities Division.

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS
**Jan Hahn, Specialist**
**444-3714**

**"Doublespeak" is hot topic**

In my January/February column, I announced that Rush Limbaugh had won the NCTE's 1994 Doublespeak Award. I also suggested that the *Quarterly Review of Doublespeak* could prove to be a useful resource in the classroom when studying language, bias, propaganda, critical reading, and thinking.

Recently I watched a 20/20 segment that revealed the inaccuracies of several so-called "statistics" that have made their way into the popular news media and talk shows. The author of *Tainted Truth*, Cynthia Crossen, discussed the distortions and misconceptions from which citizens form opinions. You can subscribe to the *Quarterly Review of Doublespeak* for $10 per year. Write to Magazine Fulfillment, NCTE, 1111 West Kenyon Road, Urbana, IL 61801-1096.

**National spotlight on Framework**

This spring, I was invited to give a presentation on the **Framework for Aesthetic Literacy** at the International Conference on Standards and Assessment at Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Participants from various states were enthusiastic about the new curriculum and eager to take the concept back to their local school districts.

I was also asked to serve as the panelist representing all the state curriculum frameworks at a FIE/FIRST Grant Project Directors meeting in Alexandria, Virginia, in May. I spoke about managing a state project successfully.

The Opera Company of Philadelphia is also interested in adapting our framework. They publish the *Sounds of Learning* program, which consists of a series of booklets, each focusing on an opera. The sample copies of *Faust*, *Salome*, and *Don Giovanni* contain background information, the script, and activities for history, geography, vocabulary, research, thinking skills, and language. You can order a set of five different booklets for $50 by writing to Education Department, 510 Walnut St., Suite 1600, Philadelphia, PA 19106.

Copies of the **Framework for Aesthetic Literacy**, which includes curriculum cycles and an instructional guide, are still available to interested Montana educators. We also have a videotape that explains the project. Teachers have found they can use parts of the framework as interdisciplinary units. Please call if you'd like a copy.

The Model Schools of Aesthetic Literacy, Arlee K-12, Bigfork Elementary, Billings Central, C.S. Porter Middle School in Missoula, and Highwood K-8, will be welcoming visitors next year. If you're interested in exploring aesthetic literacy or integration, plan to visit one of these schools or attend the open houses they will be holding.

This spring and summer, the model schools are holding meetings and "brown bag" sessions to make plans for next year. They are also holding retreats, visiting schools, attending conferences, conducting surveys and gathering baseline data, and acquiring equipment and materials to implement the framework next year.

Presentations by the ambassadors and model school staff will continue through next year. At present, we have sessions planned at the Rural Education Conference in Dillon, June 28-30, and at the MEA/MFT/MATELA Fall Conference in Missoula, October 19-20.

**Beverly Chin to be installed**

The National Council of Teachers of English fall convention, to be held November 16-19 in San Diego, will be especially important for Montana's language arts community. Dr. Beverly Ann Chin, professor of English, director of the Montana Writing Project, codirector of the English Teacher Preparation Program, and director of composition at the University of Montana, will become NCTE's president. This year, as president-elect, Beverly has been speaking at conferences all over the country, serving on the executive board, and helping make national English Language Arts Standards a reality. Beverly views this as a "lifelong learning and risk-taking adventure."

A former high school English teacher and adult education reading teacher in Melbourne, Florida, Beverly received her B.A. and M.A. in English from Florida State University and her Ph.D. in curriculum and instruction from the University of Oregon. Chin has authored *On Your Own: Writing Process; On your Own: Grammar;* and chapters in the Cambridge *GED Program: Comprehensive Book.* She has been a contributing editor to *Chinese-American Literature* and a consultant to *Tapestry: A Multicultural Anthology* and *Writer's Choice: Composition and Grammar, Grades 6-8.* She has written for *Measures for Research and Evaluation in the English Language Arts, Volume II;* and published articles in various journals.

The Montana Association of Teachers of English Language Arts plans to honor Beverly at the convention in San Diego and hopes for a significant showing of Montanans for her inaugural address.

**Writing contest winners**

For the first time, Montana's journalism students had the opportunity to participate in the Montana Press Women's High School Journalism Contest this year. Lynde Ballew of Great Falls High School (GFHS) coordinated this project. Below are the categories and winners:

**Feature:** 1st place: Anna Mundale, Great Falls High School; 2nd place: Brady Sheehan, Jefferson High School.

**Editorials:** 1st place: Rom Narducci, Charles M. Russell High (CMR); 2nd place: Kimberly Secora, GFHS.

**News:** 1st: Jeff Horwich, Hellgate High; 2nd: Brendon Burchar, GFHS.

**Columns:** 1st: Jeremy Hooker, GFHS; Melissa Luck, GFHS.

**Cartooning:** 1st and 2nd: Jake Marcinek, GFHS; Honorable Mention: Matthew Rashleight, Jefferson High.

**Graphics/Front Page Design:** 1st: Kris Arnold, GFHS; 2nd: Colleen Murray, CMR.

**Graphics:** 1st: John Watson, CMR; 2nd: Britini Miller and Chris Lindsay, Jefferson High.

**Graphic Illustration:** 1st and 2nd: Brett Weldele, GFHS.

**Graphic Design:** 1st: Anna Mundale, GFHS; 2nd: Kris Arnold, GFHS.

**Feature Photos:** 1st: Brendon Burchard, GFHS; 2nd: Sam Slebenaller, CMR.

Lynde and I joined the Montana Press Women in order to explore the kinds of opportunities that this membership could offer to teachers of journalism. This contest is one of those advantages; another is a mentor program with practicing journalists. Next year, we'd like to see many more entries. Contact Lynde Ballew, GFHS, for more information.

**Student literary magazines**

The NCTE recently honored student literary magazines in its eleventh annual awards program. The student magazines were rated on the basis of quality of content, kinds of writing included, editing and proofreading, design/artistic aspects, front matter and pagination, and type of production.

Bozeman High School won a "Superior" rating for its magazine, *Scribblings* (edited by Stephanie Hill and Ann Kosempa and advised by June Billings Saffo). Big Sky High School, Missoula, won an "Excellent" rating for *Aerie* (Mike Bolin, Sarse Nesbit, Chris Reed, and Nicki Larby, student editors; Lorilee Evans, advisor).

Montana's state leader for this project is James H. Thompson of Bozeman High School. July 1, 1995, is the deadline for submitting magazines to state leaders for judging in the 1995 Program to Recognize Excellence in Student Literacy Magazines.

**Writing awards**

Winners of the NCTE Achievement Awards in Writing for 1994 were Heidi Ross of Belgrade High School and Casey Wagner of Bozeman High School. The state coordinator for this program is Melinda Bollinger, East Middle School, Great Falls. This contest is open to high school juniors and includes a sample of the student's best writing in any genre and an impromptu essay on a subject set by the Achievement Awards Advisory Committee.

Teachers are encouraged to watch for outstanding pieces of writing during the fall of their juniors' year and submit them in January to the state coordinator, who will send the impromptu topic to entrants.

**UM offers Shakespearian experience**

The English Department at the University of Montana is offering a three-credit course this summer that will consist of one week on campus and one week at the Northwest's premiere Shakespeare Festival. From July 24 to July 28, students will meet for three hours a day on campus to study and discuss Shakespeare's plays. From August 1-4, students will reconvene in Ashland, Oregon, to attend the Shakespeare festival. Enrollment is limited.

## DEAF/BLIND EDUCATION
**Francisco Román, Specialist**
**444-4426**

**Parent workshop**

The Office of Public Instruction's Deaf-Blind Project is sponsoring a Parent Retreat/Workshop for parents of children who have been identified as having deaf-blindness. The main topic will be the McGill Action Plan (IEP writing strategy) in combination with Personal Futures Planning.

This workshop will take place the weekend of August 25-27, 1995. The presenter will be Kathy McNulty, Assistant Director of the Helen Keller National Center. For more information, please contact me at the number above.

**Assessment workshop**

The Deaf-Blind Project at OPI is sponsoring three one-day assessment/evaluation workshops for children who have, or are at risk of having, deaf-blindness. This will be offered in conjunction with Family Outreach in Butte and the Comprehensive Developmental Centers in Missoula and Kalispell.

The workshop will be held September 20-22, 1995. Participation will be limited to six children per site. Sites will be announced later.

The workshop presenter will be Tanni Anthony, deaf-blind coordinator for the state of Colorado.

## BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

Mary Cheryl Larango, Specialist
444-0516

**Why do kids need bicycle helmets?**

A recent national research study has shown that every year in the United States, head injuries in bicyclists are noted in:

- 65,000 emergency room cases;
- 7,700 hospital admissions;
- 40% of bicyclists admitted to hospitals;
- 70-80% of fatally injured bicyclists.

The study also found that bicyclists hospitalized with head injuries are 20 time as likely to die as those without and that bicyclist injury rates area highest between ages 5-15.

**What can happen to your head?**

In a severe bicycle injury, your skull may be fractured and your brain may be torn by penetrating objects and bone fragments. However, your brain can also be injured by violent impacts that leave your skull essentially undamaged. Most brain injuries are irreversible.

The source of these injuries is impact. When your head makes sudden, violent contact with something unyielding, the small part of your head that is hit stops moving immediately. But the rest of your head remains in motion. As a result, your brain and skull may break and tear before they can stop moving.

A good helmet gives your skull and brain time to match speeds with suddenly encountered objects. Helmets have been identified in the $10 range. Contact us for a listing.

**Steps to running a successful helmet campaign**

- Recruit helpers and delegate!
- Observe helmet use at your school.
- Determine a time table.
- Select a helmet source. (A listing titled *Sources of Low-Cost Helmets* is available from this office.)
- Obtain sample helmets for display and demonstration.
- Create an order form. (A sample is available from this office.)
- Create an informational letter to accompany the order form. (*Helmet Facts for Parents* is available from this office.)
- Create a display promoting helmets for your school.
- Present a helmet demonstration. (Lesson plan available from this office.)
- Distribute the order form with a due date.
- Collect order forms and checks.
- Order and distribute helmets.
- Observe helmet use and report results to school officials and parents.

**Walking school field trip: tips**

You might want to save bus money and have your class walk on its next field trip. Some tips:

**Liability:** Walk the route and create a route map. Refer to your school policy on the necessary ratio of adults to students. Alert appropriate law enforcement agencies of route and your time frame.

**Maps:** Provide a route for adults/walking teams. This is an opportunity to practice map-reading skills.

**Emergency Procedures:** Instructions should be covered with staff and adult volunteers about bee stings and other potential medical emergencies, tripping injuries, and the possibility of a student leaving the group. Include the school phone number on the map.

**Group walking:** This is an opportunity to review the pedestrian crossing sequence. Policy should be for students to OBEY traffic control devices. When the light is flashing "Don't Walk," pedestrians should not start across the intersection. If the pedestrian is already in the intersection crossing, continue to cross to the other side.

When walking as a group, "group mentality" tends to take over, especially when crossing at intersections. Unless you have obtained a "parade permit," pedestrians are to cross at crosswalks or at the corner and obey traffic control devices.

Pedestrians do have the right-of-way at marked and unmarked crosswalks, but when crossing as a large group, some pre-planning should allow vehicles to proceed instead of causing a traffic jam. To allow vehicles to proceed, the pedestrians need to stand back from the corner. When there is a gap in traffic, pedestrians group at the marked or unmarked crosswalk at the corner and proceed, continuing to look for approaching traffic to determine if cars are yielding to the pedestrians.

Even though the pedestrian has the right-of-way, we don't want anyone to be "dead right"!

## HOW TO FIT YOUR HELMET

**THE CORRECT FIT**

**A common mistake is to wear the helmet tipped too far back. It should be level front to rear and side to side. This is necessary to protect the frontal lobe of the brain. To be sure helmet is properly positioned, look in a mirror with your head slightly turned.**

## ARTS

Julie Smith, Specialist
444-4442

**Guidelines for funding assistance**

The Montana Arts Council has announced that guidelines for the 1995-96 Artists in Schools/Communities programs are now available. Call 444-6430 to receive a copy.

This valuable program provides partial funding for artists in all media (music, dance, theatre, visual arts, television/film, and creative writing) to visit schools for a week or longer. The artists present workshops and other experiences for students, educators, and community members.

**Partnerships continue to produce quality programs**

The partnership of OPI, the Montana Arts Council, and the Montana Alliance for Arts Education again sponsored two successful events this spring: a week-long series of presentations in the capitol rotunda and the Spring All-Arts Event, an inservice program for rural teachers.

From March 4 to 11, the capitol rotunda brimmed with students presenting the results of their work and talents in the arts. An exhibit organized by the Montana Art Education Association was on display all week, highlighting work by students from across the state.

During the lunch hour each day, a variety of student groups performed in the rotunda for all who stopped by to listen. On Monday, students from Belt High School presented several excellent dramatic excerpts and scenes. Tuesday treated visitors to the work of Helena's Grandstreet Theatre School. Students from the Helena Community School worked with artist-in-residence John LaFountaine to engage the audience in American Indian dancing and storytelling on Wednesday. On Thursday, the Ryegate Schools band and chorus presented a rousing program. On Friday, students from Hawthorne School in Bozeman, which integrates the arts throughout the curriculum in all grades, provided performances in music, drama, and creative writing, much to the delight of one particular legislator whose grandchildren were in the program!

The Spring All-Arts Event drew 20 rural teachers from the Polson area for two days of intensive arts experiences and workshops. Participants engaged in music, dance, drama, creative writing, and visual arts workshops as well as visiting The People's Center and Salish Kootenai College in Pablo. A special highlight was the opportunity to attend a rehearsal of a new collaborative work by world-renowned choreographer Garth Fagan, working with jazz pianist Don Pullen and his African-Brazilian Connection and the Chief Cliff Singers from the Flathead Reservation.

If you would like to attend a Spring All-Arts Event or bring a group of students to perform during future legislative sessions, contact the Montana Alliance for Arts Education (257-3241).

**Congratulations**

Congratulations to Flathead High School and the Montana Art Education Association for another exciting student festival, "Montana Art Interscholastics," March 31-April 1, 1995. This event was also supported by the Montana Arts Council and the National Endowment for the Arts.

## LIBRARY MEDIA

Diana Boom, Specialist
444-3132

**Library Media Focus Committee**

During the weekend of March 10-12, 1995, the Library Media Focus Committee that met last February reconvened in Helena. We worked with the resolutions formulated in February and presented the results at the April Montana Library Association (MSA) meeting in Billings. The revisions follow for those of you who were unable to attend the Billings meeting.

The School Library Media Division of MLA plans to continue implementing these resolutions as we go. We need your input, reactions, comments, ideas. Please send them to Polly Taggart, Shepherd Public Schools, Box 8, Shepherd, MT 59079, or Vicki Gale, Lodge Grass High School, Drawer AF, Lodge Grass, MT 59050-0559.

**Resolutions**

(Note: in the following, "school library community," unless otherwise stated, means the OPI library media specialist and Montana's school library media specialists. "LMS" means "library media specialists.")

1. "The school library community and OPI will work together to build bridges through improved communications to help all students reach their greatest potentials."

**Update:** These resolutions were presented at the 1994 Montana Library Association meeting. The School Library Media Division formed three committees to work on these resolutions. Their charge was to deal with issues in these resolutions. The Statistics Committee is working closely with the State Library's annual library survey.

**Future:** The Focus Committee will request that it continue to be a working committee with OPI. It will request that its concerns and results be disseminated to Montana's LMS. This committee will work toward availability of statewide electronic communications in all Montana school libraries.

2. The original Resolution #2 called for bringing back recommended minimum per pupil library expenditure standards for each school library in the state. This resolution could not be supported by Superintendent Nancy Keenan due to the current budget-cutting climate in the legislature. Also, Montana is moving toward qualitative standards rather than quantitative and is looking at methods for students to access technology and information. Thus, the Focus Committee is rewriting this resolution to read:

"The school library community is encouraged to use the results of a national library media expenditure survey (published in the *School Library Journal*, Oct. 1993) as a

benchmark for library media expenditures. It is recommended that they prepare a budget using these guidelines to present locally to their own administration. It is further recommended that this budget include library services (program) available within the proposed budget."

**Future:** The Focus Committee will make efforts to see that training becomes available on how to develop program-based budgets.

3. "The school library community will work to bring equal access to all students in the use of telecommunications and the information-gathering process."

**Future:** The school library community will work with the "Montana Plan: Making Good Schools Better" technology subcommittee and with the State Library's technology committee in this endeavor.

4. "The school library community stresses the importance of LMS's continued involvement in the Teacher Education Program Standards Review Process. The LMS pledge to work toward a result that will incorporate the best library practices at all levels of the library media program."

(a) Delete concern on accreditation standards wording — not necessary with new standards;

(b) There is a need for more awareness by teachers and administrators of the role of libraries and library resources in the school. The LMS feel this can best be accomplished within a core class available through teacher and administrator preparatory classes. **Update:** Dr. Carolyn Lott, library media instructor, presents library operation information in a class for administrative certification at the U of M in Missoula. Our Focus Committee commends Dr. Lott for this accomplishment. **Future:** The library community will work toward having this information become a permanent part of administrative classes and teacher training classes in the Montana university system.

(c) It is important that a practicum be available in the education program for LMS that will realistically prepare them for their roles in the K-12 education system. LMS will cooperate with higher education in continuing to upgrade this vital portion of the library media program. **Update:** The Focus Committee feels the term "realistically," in regard to a library media practicum, needs to be defined. The practicum should:

(1) be in a school year situation while school is in session;

(2) strive for continuity — consecutive, full days;

(3) be a minimum of nine weeks or 315 hours;

(4) offer K-12 experience for LMS.

**Future:** Montana LMS would like to set up a committee of practicing Montana LMS to work with Montana's university system library media instructors in implementing these proposed practicum changes and other desired changes.

The Focus Committee recommends the following additions to Resolution #4:

(d) The elements of *Information Power* should be incorporated into the library media preparation curriculum.

(e) Curriculum instruction should include a focus on collaboration between teachers and LMS.

(f) School LMS should be given the tools to perform their role as curriculum consultants, in addition to current preparation as teachers and information specialists.

5. "The school library community wishes to express concern regarding the number of library media staffing deferrals requested under the 7/1/94 standards. It is vital that these standards be implemented, given the importance of technology and of the library as the center of information in the schools." **Update:** OPI reports 98 requested deferrals. **Future:** The OPI LMS will provide information to the school library community on requested *and approved* deferrals, as well as location, grade level, approved alternatives, and their location.

6. "The school library community will work together to redefine the role of LMS as information specialists, teachers, and instructional consultants. As a part of this, the school library community will work for appropriate evaluation of school LMS relevant to their role."

**Update:** This is an ongoing process that will occur through workshops, training, and school library media committees.

**Future:** The search will continue for appropriate evaluation forms used elsewhere. Evaluation forms will be made available to school library media people. Training will be made available on using these forms through MLA and/or division retreats. The school library community will request that MEA and MFT incorporate proper evaluation for LMS in their summer leadership training.

7. "The school library community will encourage further multi-type library cooperation and resource sharing, which is especially important with the explosion of information in today's world."

**Update:** Several school/public library combinations are in operation in Montana. Interest is being shown in developing more.

**Future:** The Focus Committee recommends that school LMS become aware of and, as possible, participate in public Library Federation activities. Invite public librarians to school libraries. School LMS need to work with the State Library Futures Task Force being coordinated by the State Library. Liaison can be the OPI LMS or a member of the State Library Commission. Add library holdings to LaserCat. Be in touch with local public and special libraries and librarians.

8. "The school library community will work with OPI's LMS to compile annual K-12 library statistics. This process can begin with an information-gathering survey set up by OPI's LMS (in consultation with Dori Nielson of OPI) and the MLA."

**Update:** Add "State Library" after "and the MLA" in the last sentence above. Peggy Smith and Dan Kohnstamm were part of the SLMD Statistics Committee and worked with the State Library on an annual library survey. The OPI LMS has also gathered statistical information from Montana schools' fall reports.

**Future:** Continue to pursue more information. Build more awareness among Montana's LMS about the schools' fall reports and what is needed from libraries and librarians. Check on schools' membership to Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges. Become familiar with Northwest Association library standards. Set up a library grant clearinghouse through OPI .

9. "The LMS at OPI, with the help of the Montana school library community, will gather and disseminate information on automation in Montana, grant information, and possible discounts available through multiple purchasing."

**Update:** Information is being accessed at OPI. The LMS at OPI needs a committee from the school library community to work with her in disseminating this information.

**Future:** The school library community wishes to stress the need for a full-time LMS at OPI. The library community would be isolated without the help of this specialist. The specialist is needed as a liaison and a line of communication among all Montana library communities.

## PUPIL TRANSPORTATION
**David Huff, Specialist**
**444-4396**

### Montana to send delegates

Where does Montana get its standards for school buses? From the National Conference on School Transportation.

The conference meets once every five years and will be meeting May 21-26, 1995, at Central Missouri State University to revisit both the construction of and operational standards for school buses. Montana will send seven delegates as will each state in the union. While the standards this body develops have no binding authority of their own, they provide the model by which most states develop and evaluate their own standards. The standards form the most important body of information that influences related federal regulations.

The delegates from Montana are Sgt. Bob Hammel of the Montana Highway Patrol; Rick Verhasselt of Sidney Public Schools; George Smith of Livingston Public Schools; Steve Klippenes of Lewistown Public Schools; Al Menke, president of the Montana Association of Pupil Transportation; Dale Duff of Rocky Mountain Transportation in Whitefish; and David Huff of the Office of Public Instruction.

### Drug and alcohol testing

If you need information on the Montana Drug and Alcohol Testing program for commercial drivers, or if you want to get the required supervisor training or employee awareness training, come to the Montana Pupil Transportation Workshops.

If you have not yet registered for the workshops to be held in Kalispell, June 21-23, please do so as soon as possible. If you did not get registration materials, call me at the number above.

### Effects of SB 112 on transportation budgeting

When budgeting, don't neglect to factor in the effects of Senate Bill 112 (Chapter 298), passed by the 1995 legislature. While the changes are minor, they may affect the amounts for individual contracts and the rate for which a bus is reimbursed. Proper budgeting is necessary to ensure that you can be reimbursed for all the money you are eligible to receive.

OPI is providing information to schools on the various aspects of this bill and how it will impact school planning. Workshops are also being offered at the MASBO conference, June 14-16, in Great Falls and the MAPT workshops, June 21-23, in Kalispell. If you have questions, please call Linda Atwood at OPI (444-3096).

### Recalls

One recall in the January list involves school buses: Thomas Built Buses, Inc., 1993-94 model year for the Conventional, MVP, Saf-T-Liner and the Vista. The metal housing of the safety belt retractors on automatic locking retractor/emergency locking retractor safety belts can become deformed, preventing extension and/or retraction of the belt. Occupants would be unable to extend or retract their safety belts and would be at risk of injury in the event of an accident. The problem will be remedied free of charge if presented to an authorized dealer on an agreed upon service date, or call 910-889-4871.

## NATIONAL DIFFUSION NETWORK (NDN)
**Patricia B. Johnson, Specialist**
**444-2736**

### Program highlights

*Image Making Within The Writing Process* is an innovative, arts-based literacy program which integrates children's visual imagery at every stage of the writing process. Using art to suggest stories results in more richness in writing and illustration. For grades 2-6.

*JEFFCO Middle School Life Science* is year-long life science program that enables students to understand life science concepts and make healthy decisions. For grades 7-8. A training workshop will be held July 6-13, in Golden, Colorado.

*JEFFCO Life Science* uses learning cycles, connects life science with other subjects, and uses embedded vocabulary words. Betsy Brighton,

Hardin Middle School, is enthusiastic about this program and welcomes questions at 665-1408.

**Upcoming NDN training**

*PRISMS Physics:*
July 10-14, Missoula
*Project CRISS:*
June 26-28, Billings
August, Kalispell & Wibaux
Sept. 27-29, Big Sky
Oct. 19-20, Kalispell
*Junior Great Books:*
June 5-6, Great Falls
Aug. 15-16, Poplar
*Project Success, Lang. Arts, Level I:*
June 12-14, Great Falls
June 19-21, Billings
June 25-27, East Glacier
June 25-28, Missoula
June 29-July 1, Havre
July 5-7, Great Falls
July 24-26, Kalispell
*Project Success, Lang. Arts, Level II:*
June 19-21, Billings
July, Missoula
July 10-12, Great Falls
Aug. 31-Sept. 2, Kalispell
*Project Success, Art:*
June 29-30, Billings
*Talents Unlimited:*
June 26-28, Billings
June 29-July 1, Havre
*Talents Unl. to the Secondary Power:*
June 22-24, Havre
*Talents Unlimited Update:*
June 28-30, Billings

## SOCIAL STUDIES
**Linda Vrooman Peterson, Specialist**
**444-5726**

**GeoBuddies**

What's a GeoBuddy? Ask the fourth-grade students of Smith School in Helena and their teacher, Susan Watne, and they'll tell you. For the past several months, Susan and her students have exchanged geographic information with a class from Pensacola, Florida. In essence, these two classes are geography penpals — GeoBuddies.

A teacher consultant of the Montana Geographic Alliance, Susan takes on geography education with gusto! Her classroom exudes the five geographic themes: location, place, human and environment relationship, movement, and regions.

Geography concepts are integrated throughout the learning day, with a focus on the geography of Pensacola. At the end of April, Susan and her students did field work in Florida. They spent their time with their Pensacola GeoBuddies immersed in the landscape of Pensacola and the surrounding region. In May, the Florida students will be in Helena exploring our region. The teachers and students raised the money to visit each other's states.

This program, created by Susan Watne, is an activity of the Montana Geographic Alliance. If you'd like to know more about the Alliance or the GeoBuddy Program, please contact me or Jeff Gritzner (243-5626).

**MCSS Fall Conference**

The MCSS Annual Conference, in conjunction with the MEA/MFT conference, will be held October 19-20, 1995, in Missoula. The theme for our conference is "Social Justice." Among the many activities we have scheduled are 40 sectionals, a featured speaker with a follow-up forum, several special sessions highlighting our theme, a hospitality room, two luncheons, a tour of Fort Missoula, and the MCSS Reception. Please contact me or Stephanie Waste, MCSS president-elect, at the University of Montana (243-4217).

**Statehood Centennial Bell Award**

Teachers may be nominated for the Sixth Annual Montana Statehood Centennial Bell Award, established to honor a teacher in grades 4-8 who best teaches Montana history.

Applicants are asked to submit a two-page essay describing their approach to and experiences in teaching Montana history during the 1994-95 school year. Entries will be judged on student participation, originality, and creativity. Include three letters of support: one from an administrator, one from a parent, and one from a student.

The winning teacher and class will travel to Helena to ring the Montana Statehood Centennial Bell in the state capitol on Montana Statehood Day, November 8. The teacher and class will be honored in a special ceremony, take a tour of the state capitol, and have lunch in Helena.

The teacher will receive a plaque and $1,000 to cover lunch, travel expenses, and purchase of Montana history books for the teacher's school library.

Entries should be postmarked by October 6, 1995. Send entries to Linda Vrooman Peterson, OPI, P.O. Box 202501, Helena, MT 59620-2501. The award is sponsored by KRTV, Great Falls; KXLF, Butte; and KPAX, Missoula and administered by OPI. For more information, contact project coordinator Norma Ashby (453-7078).

**Montana: A State of Treasures**

A new Montana history textbook for the middle school level is in process. *Montana: A State of Treasures*, should be ready for distribution by the 1996-97 academic year. Mike Mullowney, a teacher of seventh and eighth grades at Absarokee, is spearheading the project. Roger Clawson, a Montana historian, will write the text and Mullowney, along with other educators, will develop supplementary teaching materials and a guide. Mullowney envisions this work as the first in a series of textbooks for teaching about the state.

The *Montana Social Studies Model Curriculum Guide* provides a suggested scope and sequence for the teaching and learning about Montana. *Montana: A State of Treasures* will provide a common text from which to develop interest in the study about ourselves. For more information, please contact me or Mike Mullowney (328-4583).

## READING/EARLY CHILDHOOD
**June Atkins, Specialist**
**444-3664**

**Family reading tips to share**

• *Time to play.* Playing a card or board game provides a ready-made reading opportunity. Reading the directions and game components with your child helps develop worthwhile skills while having fun.

• *A "taste" of menus.* Try reading menus together with your children in restaurants.

• *Let your fingers do the reading.* When your child wants to call a friend or mail a greeting card, use the telephone book together to look up names, numbers, and addresses. This is a good time to talk about emergency numbers, too.

• *Check it off.* By making a chart of your child's responsibilities and daily activities, you can help establish routines and read together, too. Have your child read and check off each activity as it is completed.

• *RTV means reading television.* Teach your child to use television listings to see what's on and whether it is worth watching. If there is nothing of interest on TV, encourage your child to select a book you can read together.

• *What's news?* Does your child receive a classroom magazine in school? If so, ask about the people and events your child has read about. Or sit down together with your local paper and look for stories of interest.

• *Family memories.* When your child receives a special card or other memento, suggest making a memory scrapbook. Have your child read the scrapbook to you each time you add a new keepsake.

• *Pet care.* If your child is interested in a pet, read together about that animal. You might read the directions on pet care products.

• *It's more than a date.* How often does your child ask what day it is or how long until a birthday? Establish a daily reading habit by reading the calendar together. Better still, make a personal calendar and fill it in with family birthdays and other special events.

• *For the fun of it.* There's no better reason for reading together than reading for fun. Sharing a good story or even a cartoon is a good way to start.

(*Reading Today*, April/May 1995)

## Kudos!

Two Whitefish High School students placed in the top 20 in a national essay contest sponsored by *Newsweek* magazine. The winning authors are Cory Anderson and Kelly Ingham. According to *Newsweek*, the essays were chosen because of their passion and strong voice.

Four fifth-grade students from Big Timber Elementary were chosen as the first-place winning team in the national Space Science Student Involvement Program's Future Aircraft/Spacecraft Design competition. The competition is sponsored by NASA and the National Science Teachers Association. Ariel Overstreet, Jerick Graves, Megan Brewer, and Daniel Karlin will attend the National Space Science Symposium with their teacher, Rolland Karlin, in Washington, D.C., this May.

## Nutrition Education & Training Program
**Katie Bark, Specialist**
**994-5641**

March was an exciting month for the NET Program as it awarded its first mini-grants to sponsor creative nutrition education projects around the state. Four awards (up to $500 each) were selected to develop fun, hands-on nutrition education activities with school-aged children. The winners are:

Nancy O'Hara, Even Start Program, Billings

Lynn Oldham, Community After School Activities (CASA), Billings

Diana Morris, Abraham Lincoln Alternative School, Butte

JoAnne Stewart, Victor School, Victor

The NET Program would like to congratulate the winners and thank all the applicants for their applications. Each grant-funded project will be "showcased" in the 1995-1996 school year to give educators the opportunity of replicating activities with other students. Look for detailed project descriptions in future *Montana Schools* issues.

National Nutrition Month was also celebrated in March with participation in the "Eat Right Montana" Poster Contest Award Ceremony. Three students were chosen for their creative illustrations depicting this year's theme, "Discover Nutrition Anytime, Anywhere." The award ceremony was held in Helena at the capitol rotunda with Governor Racicot presenting these artistic students with their awards. The NET Program was happy to sponsor this event and looks forward to participating in it next year.

**School food service conference**

The 19th Annual Training Conference for school food service personnel is scheduled for August 1-3, 1995. Entitled "On Track . . . Quality Thru' Partnerships," it will be held in Billings at the Plaza Holiday Inn. On July 31, 1995, preconference sessions will be held on topics ranging from basic school food service to dietary guidelines and marketing. This joint venture, sponsored by the Montana School Food Service Association and OPI, provides training on the hottest issues of child nutrition. The conference will include an extensive vendor show and allow numerous opportunities to network with others in the profession. Look for registration information in the mail soon, or contact Sherry Freeman (452-0088) or Ralph Kroon (444-2502).

# Bulletin Board

**Listings in the Bulletin Board do not necessarily imply endorsement by the Office of Public Instruction.**

**State Parks videos**

A new video about Makoshika State Park, "Makoshika, Crossroads to the Past," explores dinosaurs, the badlands of Eastern Montana, and great geologic shifts and land clashes. Cost is $19.9S ($3.SS for shipping).

The "Paradise Below" video about Lewis and Clark Caverns State Park is also available, as is a new conservation video, "Three Men, Three Rivers," which explores the lives of three men and their influence on three Montana rivers: Bud Lilly, the Madison; George Grant, the Big Hole; and Dan Bailey, the Yellowstone. Contact Debbie Cheek, Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks, 1420 E. 6th Ave., Helena, MT S9620.

**Learning about the wild**

You are invited to spend two days in the shadow of the Bob Marshall Wilderness exploring the new Wilderness and Land Ethics Awareness Box and curriculum for grades K-8.

The Wilderness Box brings the wild into the classroom with skulls, skins, puppets, books, maps, and more. The curriculum integrates language arts, geography, math, science, and history.

To introduce the box, a workshop will be held July 11-13, 199S, at the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Ranch near Dupuyer. The $25 fee covers meals, lodging, and the curriculum guide. Sponsors are the Forest Service, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Boone and Crockett Conservation Education Program, and Montana Environmental Education Association.

Contact Gloria Weisgerber, Forest Service, Missoula, MT (329-3094).

**Flying workshops and camps**

The Montana Aeronautics Division offers summer opportunities for educators and students:

**Summer camps:** Flying workshops and camps for students will be held at the University of Montana-Missoula and Rocky Mountain College, Billings. Students will discover how things fly, how air traffic is controlled, how weather information is gathered, and more. High Flyer Aerospace Camp for grades 1-3 takes places June 19-23, 9:00-noon, at UM and RMC. Camp for grades 4-6 takes place June 26-30, 9:00-noon, UM and RMC.

Advanced registration is required by June 1. Fee is $85. Contact UM (243-4626) or RMC (657-1040).

**Rocky Mountain Aero Camp:** For students entering grades 7-11, this camp will be held July 10-14. Campers will fly three times with aviation instructors and train in a flight simulator. Fee is $400; $495 for students who need meals and lodging. Contact Rocky Mountain College (657-1040).

**Teacher workshop:** June 19-30, UM-Missoula and Rocky Mountain College, Billings. An introduction to aviation flight, this course will provide resources for teaching aerospace units with existing curriculum. Fee is $250; scholarships are available for the first 30 teachers to register. Credits are available. Contact Montana Aeronautics Division (444-2506).

**Aviation Awareness Art Contest:** The Aeronautics Division's annual art contest is for students in grades 1-12. Prizes range from a round-trip flight to free tuition for the 199S Experimental Aircraft Association. For details, contact the Montana Aeronautics Division, P.O. Box 5178, Helena, MT S9604 (444-2S06).

## Goals 2000

(Continued from page 3)

Instruction developed The Montana Plan: Making Good Schools Better. This project was designed to support local school improvement efforts and develop a statewide plan for improving schools.

To fund the plan, the governor and OPI jointly applied to the U.S. Department of Education for funding under Goals 2000: Educate America Act.

Following approval of the application, Governor Racicot and Superintendent Nancy Keenan jointly appointed a panel to develop a statewide school improvement plan. They also appointed a task force to develop a state technology plan.

The panel and technology task force, composed of parents, educators, and community members from across the state, began meeting in February to discuss how Montanans can improve their local schools. ■

## Legislative update

(Continued from page 1)

million for 1996-97.

SB 112 (Stang, St. Regis) distributes the state and county transportation reimbursements based on "weighted ridership points" for school bus routes, requires a passenger count for high school programs, increases room and board rates for individual transportation contracts, and clarifies the duties of county transportation committees.

**Taxation and Schools**

SB 417 (Keating, Billings) lowers the property tax rate on business equipment and machinery from 9 percent to 6 percent over a three-year period beginning January 1, 1996. School districts and local governments will be reimbursed for the loss of property tax revenues for three years. For the tax year beginning January 1, 1999, the reimbursement will be phased out by 10 percent each year until it is eliminated in 2009.

Districts will allocate the reimbursement to the district general fund in the same manner as other nonlevy revenues, to reduce the BASE budget levy.

In districts eligible for guaranteed tax base (GTB) aid, this reimbursement will also reduce the state GTB payment. Therefore, the GTB-eligible district will see a decrease in its GTB payment while at the same time experiencing a reduction in the district taxable valuation used to fund the over-BASE portion of the budget.

SB 412 (Grosfield, Big Timber) revises the taxation of oil and gas production. The bill has two major impacts on schools: 1) it accelerates the payment of local government severance taxes on calendar 1995 production with the result of providing schools in oil and gas producing areas with a windfall, and 2) beginning in calendar 1996, schools will receive the oil and gas tax distributions within 120 days following the end of the production quarter. This second change will make it quite difficult to accurately anticipate the oil and gas tax revenue available to fund the budget.

The accelerated LGST payment will be distributed in July 1996 and again in July 1997. Schools may deposit this revenue in any budgeted fund of the district or in the miscellaneous programs fund. If the district chooses to deposit the monies in the general fund, it may reserve the funds as excess reserves with the option of using the funds to reduce over-BASE levies. ■

**—Madalyn Quinlan, OPI Revenue Analyst**

## Highland School

(Continued from page 6)

laborative effort, a product of community support and parent, staff, and student dedication. The end result was an enhanced appreciation of art and a tremendous sense of accomplishment for the entire Billings community. ■

**—Beth Satre, OPI Communications Specialist**

*(For more information about "New Faces," contact Judy Evans, Highland School, Billings (255-3850). Copies of the New Faces publication and videos of "Jack and the Golden Goose" are available from Highland School for $7 and $17, respectively, postage included.)*

# CALENDAR

## June 1995

**1, 8, 15, & 22:** Figure drawing class by Sandra Dal Poggetto, Archie Bray Foundation, Helena—443-3502

**12-16:** Montana Agriculture Education Update Conference, Bozeman—Leonard Lombardi, OPI, 444-44S1

**12-16:** Montana Institute for Effective Teaching of American Indian Children, Great Falls—Bob Parsley, OPI, 444-3013

**18-21:** We the People: Rich in Diversity, Black Hills State University, Spearfish, SD—Linda Vrooman Peterson, OPI, 444-5726

**19-30:** Advanced Driver Education Workshops, Lewistown—Curt Hahn, OPI, 444-4432

**21-23:** Montana Association for Pupil Transportation Summer Conference, Kalispell—Helen Hagen, 4S4-6776

**26-29:** NASDTEC Annual Conference, Whitefish—Don Freshour, OPI, 444-2577

## July 1995

**10-31:** Advanced Driver Education Workshops, Lewistown — Curt Hahn, OPI, 444-4432

**20-21:** Certification Advisory Council (CSPAC), Helena—Peter Donovan, 444-0301

**23-August 5:** Montana Geographic Alliance Summer Institute, "In the Heart of the Rockies," University of Montana—Linda Vrooman Peterson, OPI, 444-5726, or Jeff Gritzner, 243-S626

**31-Aug. 3:** School Food Service Training Conference, Ralph Kroon, OPI, 444-2S02 or Sherry Freeman, 482-0088

## August 1995

**1-19:** Advanced Driver Education Workshops, Lewistown—Curt Hahn, OPI, 444-4432

## September 1995

**27-29:** Title I Fall Conference, Big Sky-Gwen Smith, OPI, 444-5660

## October 1995

**19-20:** MEA/MFT Teacher Conference, Missoula—Eric Feaver, MEA, 442-42S0, Jane Duncan, MEA, 728-0511, Nancy Fritz, MEA, 549-6712; Jim McGarvey, MFT, 442-2123, Ann Thomas, MFT, 494-563S, Janice Muller-Kohn, MFT, 363-2919

**19-20:** Montana Assoc. of Language Teachers Fall Meeting, Missoula—Duane Jackson, OPI, 444-3129, or Bob Acker, UM, 243-4538

**19-20:** Montana Council for the Social Studies Fall Conference, Missoula—Linda Vrooman Peterson, OPI, 444-S726

**19-21:** Rocky Mountain Regional IRA Conference, Billings—June Atkins, OPI, 444-3664

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